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## REPORT



University  
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Education

# EVALUATION OF REEL TO REAL MOVING IMAGE EDUCATION PROJECT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE RECEIVING MORE CHOICES, MORE CHANCES

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**February 2009**

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February 2009.

# **Executive Summary**

## **Introduction**

In March 2008, Scottish Screen commissioned the Faculty of Education in the University of Glasgow to conduct an evaluation of the *Reel to Real* project. *Reel to Real* was a joint Scottish Screen and Urban Learning Space development initiative that built on previous experience of similar Moving Image Education Initiatives. The context of the project was those training providers funded by Skills Development Scotland in the greater Glasgow area to offer training opportunities for young people requiring more choices and more chances. That is, young people who had left school with little or no qualifications and who were not in education or employment.

The primary purpose of this initiative was to offer training in Moving Image Education for training agency staff and a group of mentors recruited by Urban Learning Space, with the aim of creating a cohort of trainers who could, in effect, become lead practitioners in moving image education able to take on the role of training colleagues.

## **Research Parameters**

The purpose of the research was to evaluate the efficacy of the *Reel to Real* initiative, and to assess the impact on training provider staff and the young people with whom they work. Scottish Screen, Skills Development Scotland and Urban Learning Space had four issues that defined the parameters of the research, namely:

- The benefits, if any, for trainers and learners (including any impact on trainers' pedagogies);
- Participants' experiences of the various stages of the initiative (including the young people involved);
- Sustainability of the initiative and any impact beyond the period of the input;
- The effectiveness of this initiative as a model for the introduction, development and sustainability of MIE in this context.

## Summary of findings

The findings of the research conducted are summarised as follows:

### *Benefits for trainers and learners*

- Evidence from the research indicated that there were significant benefits for the trainers and learners as a result of their engagement with MIE;
- There was increased confidence for both trainers and young people;
- Working with others was a beneficial experience for both trainers and young people;
- The public screening of projects boosted confidence, self-efficacy and self-esteem for young people;
- There was an increase in skills repertoire and a widening of horizons for trainers;
- The degree to which trainers and young people benefited from each of the above varied.

### *Participants' experiences of the various stages of the initiative*

- The Learn and Teach phases merged into one activity
- More time was spent watching, discussing and listening than practical work with recording equipment);
- The role of mentors, and their relationship with trainers, would benefit from clarification;
- The discrete status of the three phases, Learn, Teach and Embed, requires reconsideration.

### *Sustainability of Reel to Real and any impact it has beyond the period of the input*

- Moving Image Education and other elements of media intelligence continue to be part of the curricula in training providers and/or elements of the repertoire of trainers' skills;
- The availability of suitable equipment is essential for the sustainability of the project;
- Increased skills of trainers and mentors will aid sustainability beyond the lifetime of the project.

### *The effectiveness of this initiative as a model for the introduction, development and sustainability of MIE in this context*

- The project has created a new cohort of fifteen potential trainers and introduced or reinforced MIE into seven training providers;
- The model works well in geographical areas that contain a concentration of training providers;

- The personal and professional qualities of the lead practitioner were a significant factor in the effectiveness of the model;
- Locating the training away from the trainers' place of work and the experience of networking with peers contributed significantly to the effectiveness of the model;
- Relevance of MIE and trainers' enjoyment of the training were significant factors in the effectiveness of *Reel to Real*.

# 1. Background

As part of their activities within the City of Glasgow, Skills Development Scotland (SDS) and its predecessor, Scottish Enterprise, has responsibility for the development of young people who are currently not in education, employment or training and who consequently require ‘more choices and more chances’. In order to fulfil this responsibility SDS subcontract training of young people to a network of Training Providers who deliver the ‘Get Ready for Work’ programme. This programme is made up of three strands – Vocational, Personal Development, and Lifeskills. This MIE project involved young people participating in the Lifeskills Strand, the aim of which is to engage with young people and help them to discover their own abilities and raise confidence, self-esteem and self-efficacy.

In order to raise the quality of provision for young people, SDS seeks to develop the skills and abilities of trainers employed by the sub-contracted providers. As part of this initiative, SDS in conjunction with Scottish Screen has introduced a number of Moving Image Education (MIE) initiatives<sup>1</sup>, the most recent being the *Reel to Real* project, managed by Urban Learning Space.

Following the success of previous experiences of MIE with this group, Urban Learning Space at The Lighthouse, Glasgow, applied to Scottish Screen for joint funding to set up a new initiative, *Reel to Real*. The purpose of this initiative was to offer training in MIE for training agency staff in the 17 providers funded by SDS. In addition to training trainers to provide MIE for their client groups, the initiative also aimed to create a cohort of trainers who could, in effect, become lead practitioners, able to take on the role of training colleagues. The initiative ran from May 2008 until December 2008. The training was organised in two blocks as follows:

**Block A 2 May 2008 – 18 July 2008:** 9 x input sessions for trainers at Digital Media Academy and Lighthouse Education Workshop followed by on-site workshops at training provider premises.

**Block B 22 August 2008 – 7 November 2008:** 9 x input sessions for a second group of trainers at Digital Media Academy and Lighthouse Education Workshop followed by on-site workshops at training provider premises.

Each block consisted of three phases: *Learn*, in which trainers and mentors engaged with the basics of film; *Teach*, in which trainers and mentors practised, developed and built on what they had learned during the Learn phase; and *Embed*, in which trainers used MIE with their young people, both supported by mentors and on their own.

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<sup>1</sup> For example, Head, G (2008) *Evaluation of Moving Image Project for young people not in employment, education or training*. Scottish Screen available at [www.scottishscreen.com](http://www.scottishscreen.com)



## **2. Research Design and Methodology**

In order to judge the efficacy of the MIE initiative, Scottish Screen, SDS and ULS had four issues that formed the basis of the research, namely:

- The benefits, if any, for trainers and learners (including any impact on trainers' pedagogies);
- Participants' experiences of the various stages of the initiative (including the young people involved);
- Sustainability of the initiative and any impact beyond the period of the input;
- The effectiveness of this initiative as a model for the introduction, development and sustainability of MIE in this context.

### **Methodology**

The methodologies used for collecting qualitative data were:

- Observation of training sessions
- Focus groups of young people involved in *Reel to Real*
- 1:1 interviews with training staff involved in *Reel to Real*
- 1:1 interviews with training provider team leaders / managers
- 1:1 interviews with Scottish Screen and ULS staff
- 1:1 interviews with the lead practitioner and mentors involved in *Reel to Real*

### **3. Findings**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

During orientation meetings with Scottish Screen, ULS, SDS and providers, it was agreed that the first phase of the data collection for the evaluation should take place during the training sessions at the Digital Media Academy and the Lighthouse Education Workshop. It was also agreed that the researchers would choose a representative sample of trainers from each of Block A and Block B that they would visit in order to observe mentors and trainers working with young people, interview trainers, and conduct focus groups with young people, if available. Moreover, it was agreed that all other trainers, mentors, the lead practitioner, Urban Learning Space staff and Scottish Screen staff would be offered interviews.

#### **3.2 Observation of training sessions**

##### **General Observation**

Across Block A and B, observation was made of the training sessions. Observation encompassed both content and participant activity. Of the 18, 3-hour sessions delivered (9 in Block A and 9 in Block B), members of the evaluation team were in attendance for 14. Participant attendance for both blocks differed slightly, with an average of 6 trainers present at each of the sessions in Block A compared to four trainers in Block B. All three mentors in Block A were present at each of the observed training sessions, with an average of four out of a possible six attending each week in Block B.

The function of the course was to support the trainers to develop and build upon new skills through a series of tasks over the Block. The sessions consisted of a mixture of tasks to encourage trainers to feel comfortable with basic digital literacy and recording. Training was structured in three phases: Learn, Teach and Embed. The Learn and Teach phases focussed upon basic knowledge and understanding of digital media before the trainers embarked upon putting theory into practice during the Embed phase at their respective training centres.

Trainers were first introduced to the theory or film ‘language’ through basic shots and filming styles in the Learn phase. These were illustrated through a variety of short films and clips. In order to understand and analyse film themes and shots, the ‘Similarities, Surprises, Patterns and Puzzles’ (SSPP) task was introduced. This analysis exercise could be transferred easily to trainers’ respective training centres. Although for both Blocks this was led largely by the lead practitioner, by Block B mentors and trainers had the opportunity to lead the SSPP analytical exercise more frequently. The majority of the tasks undertaken, both analytical and creative during the Learn and Teach sessions were justified and understood in relation to theory. With

the support of the mentors, however, small groups of trainers developed short films and learned basic editing skills.

Reference was made to a 'how to' booklet which was available online or in paper format, and this resource was developed during Block A and made fully available in Block B. Whilst reference was made to the booklet during the sessions, the trainers and mentors were encouraged to consult this at their own convenience. Both Blocks of trainers also had the opportunity to work with mentors on a short practical task, using the filming equipment and software to record and edit their own choice of either a short story or documentary.

In order to understand the significance of the data gathered, it is helpful to consider Scottish Screen's perspective on MIE and media literacy:

*'For Scottish Screen, the term moving image education refers to learning and teaching practices which develop moving image media literacy... These practices involve analysing moving image texts, creating them, exploring, appreciating, enjoying and sharing them, and understanding their rhetorical and aesthetic operation. This is neatly expressed in the '3Cs' of media literacy: cultural access, critical understanding, and creative activity. The '3Cs' are overlapping parts of a whole, each enriching and supporting the development of the other aspects, rather than separate and distinct learning activities.'*

*(Scottish Screen (2009) Moving Image Education in Scotland)*

It is important to realise, therefore, that for Scottish Screen, any perceived division between analysis and creativity, and among the three phases of Learn, Teach and Embed, is largely one of categorisation and organisation of activity rather than a real separation of learning and teaching activities, which form a holistic process in which each of these is taking place at any one time.

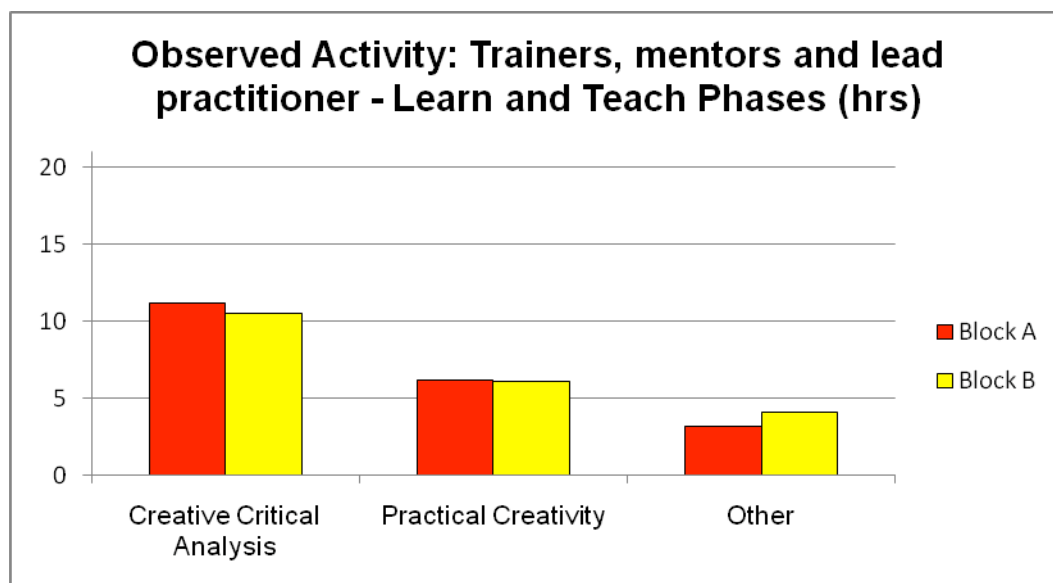
Across all observed Learn and Teach sessions in both Blocks A and B, the balance of time had a tendency towards creative critical analysis through watching, listening and discussion rather than hands-on, practical creativity tasks. The ratio was almost 2:1 in both Blocks. In the table and figure below, the listening and analysis based activities, included the Similarities, Surprises, Patterns and Puzzles grid, watching films, and answering the lead practitioner's questions. Mentors and trainers also had the opportunity to lead some of the creative analysis activities. Practical creativity involved working with digital equipment and material, filming and editing. 'Other' relates to the administrative arrangements, informal discussion and breaks which occurred during the sessions. The time spent on each aspect in actual hours is represented in table 1 as follows:

**Table 1 Observed activity (in hours and minutes)**

	Creative Critical Analysis	Practical Creativity	Other
Block A	11' 20	6' 20	3' 20
Block B	10' 50	6' 05	4' 05

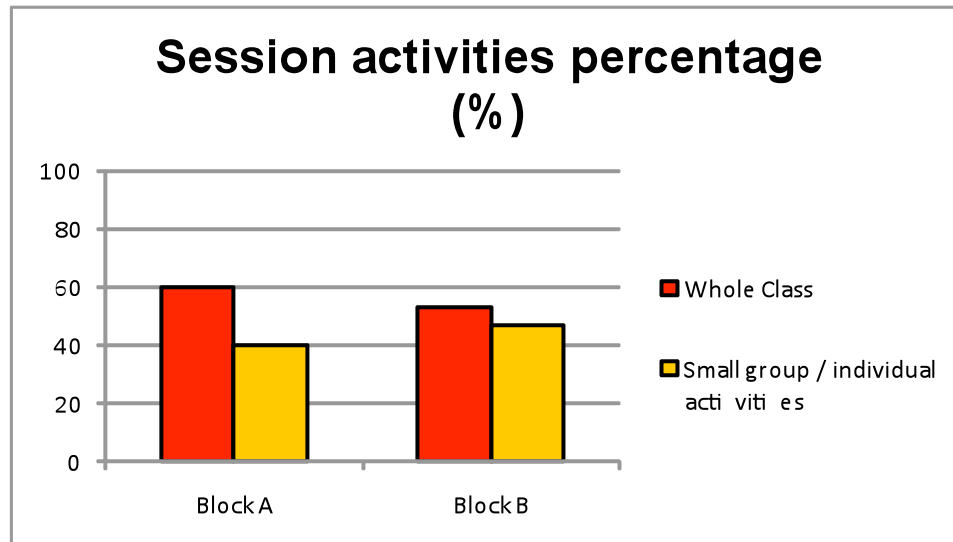
Proportionately, the same activities are represented in figure 1:

**Figure 1 observed activity**



Time spent on the different types of activities, that is, whole class teaching activities and small group or individual activities is represented proportionately in figure 2:

**Figure 2 session activities**



### **Observation of the Lead Practitioner**

The first lesson of each Block began with an overview of the course aims and content. At the beginning of each session, the lead practitioner began by outlining details of the day's tasks, connecting, where appropriate, the new learning experience to prior sessions. Explanations of the theoretical content were illustrated through practical examples from short films, with new concepts reinforced through repetition and visual illustrations during both Blocks.

A short filming task was introduced in week 3 of both Blocks A and B. Although it was suggested that this should be a documentary the trainers and mentors were encouraged to be as creative as they wished to be, with the overriding aim of gaining familiarity with the recording equipment and software being paramount. During practical group work, the lead practitioner had an active 'hands on' role, supporting and facilitating the learning and contributing to the groups as and when required. This was the case in both Blocks.

### **Observation of trainers**

There were two differences of group composition of trainers between Blocks A and B. For Block A, an average of 6 participants attended the weekly sessions, compared to an average of 4 in Block B. Although this did not affect the content of the session, it became more noticeable in relation to mentor support during the small practical

tasks and especially during the Embed phase, where lead practitioner and mentor attendance amounted effectively to 1:1 (or in some cases 2:1) support for trainers. Block A also had proportionately more listening and lead practitioner led content in comparison to Block B where there was a greater emphasis on individual and small group work (see figure 2 above).

The trainers on Block A gradually contributed increasingly to the sessions by responding to and asking questions. The trainers who participated in Block B contributed earlier in the session, as two of the five participants had prior experience of working with digital media. This was also the case for the mentors in Block B who contributed to the sessions through asking questions regularly. When participating in practical and small group tasks, the trainers appeared engaged in the activities and were assisted and supported by the mentors and lead practitioner. There were more opportunities for interaction between the mentors, lead practitioner and trainers in Block B than in Block A, in part due to the smaller number of participants. Two trainers in Block B also had the opportunity to lead the analysis task. This was also made available to the participants in Block A, but no trainers wished to contribute in this way.

## **Observation of mentors**

There were two significant differences in the constitution of the mentor group between Blocks A and B. The first difference was in the number of mentors, which in Block B had doubled from Block A. The increase in mentors also saw a wider array of specialisms, for example music, drama, photography in addition to recording and media. On average, all three mentors in Block A attended the weekly sessions. Mentor attendance in Block B averaged four of a possible 6 mentors present at the sessions each week.

Another significant difference was the role of the mentor in the training sessions. Block A saw the three mentors in largely the same role as trainers, with the learning led by the lead practitioner. At other times in this Block, however, the three mentors were guided by the lead practitioner to conduct some exercises, for example using the SSPP analysis grid. In addition, they were called on to offer assistance to trainers in practical tasks. Mostly, however, mentors in Block A used their acting or technical skills to demonstrate how a shot or a scene might work. Block B saw more mentor input. Although the mentors remained in a similar role to trainers, in Block B they were given greater encouragement by the lead practitioner to become involved through the same tasks as Block A mentors. Block B mentors also asked more questions concerning clarification of content, especially during the Teach phase. Block B also saw the expertise of all attending mentors used productively in small group work.

Mentors were assigned to trainers for the Embed phase towards the end of the teach phase in both Blocks.

## Observation of Embed phase

Four Embed phase contexts were observed by the evaluation team, two in Block A and two in Block B. These sessions presented opportunities to see how trainers and mentors worked with young people at their centres. Three of the sessions observed were trainer led with mentor support, one was entirely trainer led. The trainers to mentors ratio differed among the observations. One observed session was conducted entirely by a trainer whilst another had two trainers and one mentor. The remaining two observed sessions involved two mentors working alongside one trainer. In the session involving two trainers, one supported the young people with the technical aspects of filming, whilst the other co-ordinated the participants through questioning.

In the session that was entirely trainer led the young people were encouraged to develop their own ideas, use the equipment themselves and make comments on the ideas generated. In most sessions, although ideas were initiated by trainers they became client led, for example, through commenting on shots and direction. Mentors supported both young people and trainers and in two centres participated in the film itself.

### 3.3 Training staff perspectives

Following completion of the Learn and Teach phases in each Block, two training provider sites were visited. In addition to observations and focus groups, interviews were conducted with trainers. In addition, on completion of both Blocks A and B, all trainers who had participated were invited to be interviewed. A total of 10 trainers accepted the offer and were interviewed. The following represents their perspectives on MIE and the *Reel to Real* project.

#### Involvement and Understanding

In response to questions regarding their use of MIE, the majority of trainers indicated that they continued to use MIE beyond the Learn and Teach phases and the lifetime of the project. Those trainers who were no longer using MIE tended to be from Block A and the main reason given was removal of equipment for use in Block B. The majority of trainers also gave some indication of personal insight and gain from involvement in MIE:

*It was good to see what standard could be achieved with a short film. I hadn't been exposed to these so it was good.*

Most trainers indicated that they understood that the purpose of the project related to increasing the confidence and self-efficacy of the young people with whom they work, although several reported that, at the beginning of the Learn phase, they were unclear as to the exact purpose and how this might be achieved:

*It was a long time, and it seemed at the time you weren't learning enough, but I have picked up enough. You learn more than you think in the 10 weeks.*

Half the trainers also mentioned benefits for themselves as being among the purposes and one trainer saw the project in a wider context related to learning:

*Very much about educating kids about their learning and the underlying factor of learning and doing work and engaging values of work rather than just learning about the media industry.*

All trainers reported that they had enjoyed the course and felt that it would benefit their professional development. Similarly, those trainers who had used it with their clients reported that the young people had enjoyed it, had gained in confidence, and had thoroughly enjoyed and had gained a sense of achievement from the screening:

*Originally I thought that some of the young people wouldn't take to it. More confidence to try different things with them. A bit of an eye opener that they actually took to it.*

The majority of trainers commented on the value of the experience of meeting and working with their peer group on this project.

### **Scottish Screen's input**

All training staff reported that they had enjoyed the challenges presented by the training sessions conducted by the lead practitioner at the Digital Media Academy and the Lighthouse Education Workshop.

*He was good and made me think. He made me think about new things. You really had to pay attention.*

Whilst acknowledging their appreciation of the lead practitioner's input, the trainers perceived that some aspects of the course were more engaging than others. In particular, there was a feeling that more time could have been spent on practical activities. They also stated that whilst they found the theoretical aspects interesting and necessary for understanding of the practical, a shift in balance towards more practical tasks would have rendered them more confident in their own delivery of MIE. Notwithstanding the above, a few trainers expressed personal enjoyment of the analysis of films:

*Up to a certain point theory was good, but it was too much. Cut this down and get down to using that time on the equipment and learning on how to use it. Knowing about the shots and theory was good, but practical laptop sessions were far better.*



*I enjoyed analysis and used the SSPP grid with the groups who found it good too. It gave me a chance to use the correct terms whereas before I would have just watched the film.*

Most trainers found little distinction between the Learn and Teach phases. There was general agreement that provision of these phases at sites other than training providers' premises was highly beneficial. One trainer from Block A expressed some feeling of apprehension during the Teach phase. The apprehension arose out of anticipation of the Embed phase. Other trainers in Block A expressed a concern over their own confidence regarding the prospect of using MIE with young people. However, all reported that the practical filming and editing sessions helped build confidence in their ability to use MIE.

Some trainers from Block A also reported a measure of confusion regarding exactly what should happen during the Embed phase. All trainers were highly appreciative of the support received from the lead practitioner and ULS staff during this phase of Block A.

There was also a mixed response to mentor support. This was especially marked between Block A and Block B. Whilst the Block B trainers reported almost complete satisfaction with mentor support, the Block A trainers largely reported feeling unsupported. Trainers from Block A reported that there had been a 'time-lapse' between completion of the Teach phase and the mentor working with them in the Embed phase. In response to questions regarding development of MIE training, trainers from Block A highlighted this time lapse as a significant gap that required to be addressed. In individual cases, however, trainers appreciated the level and quality of support from their mentor:

*Kids were fine with [mentor]. [Mentor] met me on a Sunday to give me short films to use the next week. [Mentor] was really helpful.*

## Impact on learning and teaching

Unsurprisingly given the range of training providers and young people involved, trainers reported mixed impact on learning. For some trainers, there had been a significant impact for a small number of their clients whilst for others the impact was seen as universal. The greatest reported impact was on young people's confidence and realisation that they are more capable of learning and undertaking a greater range of activities than they had previously thought:

*It will transfer and give them a boost into other areas that they've never worked in before.*

In terms of skills and abilities they felt young people had developed that they might not have learned elsewhere, the majority of trainers cited technical skills using cameras and computers. The main benefits for young people as learners cited by the trainers were the development of collaborative skills, the generation and pursuit of ideas, and a sense of enjoyment and pleasure at seeing the finished product.

Two of the trainers from Block B, however, made extensive reference to the value of analysis for their young people and a surprising (to them) level of success using the similarities, surprises, patterns and puzzles grid:

*Getting kids to look at things and analyse rather than just say '\*\*\*\*'.  
A tool for thinking – if they can do it (analyse) with films, then they can do it with anything.*

*Analysis was good for goals and outcomes to help break them down further.*

Evidence from the interviews reveals that the trainers and the training providers made different use of the various aspect of MIE. For example, not all trainers used analysis of film with their young people, or used it sparingly, whilst others, especially from Block B, appear to have had success in engaging young people with analysis. Similarly, whilst all groups became involved in making a moving image artefact, some young people participated in the production stage but did not do any editing, which was left to mentors and the lead practitioner. Again, this was especially the case in Block A.

In terms of their own practice, the most frequently mentioned benefit was a realisation of the value of a teamwork approach and the possibility of finding new ways of working with young people:

*The product caught our imagination and made us laugh. It opened a new way for me to look at things now; opened me up to become more involved in stuff and how to do things with the young lads - I would*

*have said no before I went on this. I got more interested as we got on.  
It was something I hadn't done before*

Finally, the majority of trainers reported that engagement in this project has resulted in an increase in their skills base both in terms of MIE *per se* and in the use of moving images and other digital materials in their general work.

### **Reflection on *Reel to Real***

In response to questions regarding sustainability of MIE, trainers cited the impact on young people and their learning as the most significant features. The levels of enjoyment, teamwork and satisfaction with the final product were seen as being highly beneficial for young people and the factors most likely to persuade them and the training providers to use MIE again.

*It was really worthwhile and the kids got a lot out of it. I was teaching them stuff without them knowing it. MIE makes you learn so much: teamwork, motivation skills that you might not get in another subject or course.*

The main barrier to sustainability lay in the perceived need for technical equipment and support:

*Only thing I would say is that a lot more support is needed, especially editing and the technical stuff. If you're not familiar with computers or that software it can be difficult from the beginner's view.*

*In [training provider] we need the equipment to do another film. We don't have editing software and cameras.*

Suggestions for improvement of the project referred mostly to the trainers' own experiences of the Learn and Teach phases. There was a widespread perception that the Learn and Teach phases were repetitive and could be merged into one 5 week session with the remainder of time added on to the Embed phase. Without offering specific examples, around 50% of the trainers also felt that mentors could have been better used.

Perhaps, though, a feature of added value of the project lay outside the immediate domain of MIE but captured the value of trainers from different providers having the opportunity to work with each other:

*I really enjoyed it. It was good to get out and meet other trainers and training providers. It was good for networking and getting to know people. In these places you don't get a lot of time so you can have a chance to see other people in the same areas.*

### 3.4 Young people's perspectives

#### Introduction

The final stage of the *Reel to Real* programme was the Embed phase. This involved the trainers, with the support of their mentor(s), replicating their experiences of the Learn and Teach phases, and their understanding of digital media, at their training centres with the young people. The aim was to create a short film which would be screened at a showcase at the end of the programme. Three sets of focus groups with young people from three separate training agencies were conducted over the course of the evaluation. One was conducted at the end of Block A, with the other two at the end of Block B. The themes for the focus groups centred upon what the young people felt that they had learned and how this may help them in future employment.

#### Response to digital media project

All young people interviewed in the focus groups had participated and been involved in their digital projects in different roles, for example, acting, directing or script writing. Some centres had used analytical exercises with some short films with their trainees prior to the practical project whereas others had simply introduced the recording project. Whilst the content and theme of each film was different, the young people felt that they were involved across the project and had the opportunity to experience most of the tasks involved in recording a film. The first focus group conducted at the end of Block A created a film about work. The two films from Block B focus groups were a documentary and a drama-music video.

The project had allowed for some of the young people to learn about the different tasks involved in making a film. Whereas the young people from the focus group in Block A were largely acting, there was a wider variety of roles taken up in Block B. Each film required the young people to learn different skills and techniques that they would not have had access to within the usual practices of their training centre:

*[we] learned how to use things like cameras and green screens...we made costumes, make up, scenes. We were all involved in editing [and] everyone got a chance to use the cameras. (focus group 3)*

Common across all focus groups was an initial feeling of nerves and embarrassment, especially regarding being on camera. Understanding the different tasks involved, however, allowed them to contribute and participate in other ways. One participant in focus group 3 felt that he was nervous in front of the camera, but being involved in the recording process and learning about other tasks needed for filming had helped alleviate his nerves. A similar view was shared in focus groups 1 and 2:

*I was nervous as I was going to be on a TV. I just had a laugh. It was funny at the GFT. I wasn't that embarrassed there...I was frightened in*

*case they tried to point me out. I was quite happy with it [the final film]. (focus group 1)*

*I really liked the experience. It was a bit embarrassing to start off with, but once I got into it, it became easier. I had the starring role, I didn't do any of the other stuff [filming, planning, editing] as I was mostly acting. There wasn't anything that I didn't like...perhaps the zoom up at the end! (focus group 2)*

The young people involved in the focus groups reported a positive response by the end of the project. Young people in focus group 3 in particular were beginning to plan their next film and could identify how they would improve upon their previous recording.

## **Impact of the experience on young people**

From their involvement in the MIE project and including overcoming their initial embarrassment and nerves, the young people could identify what they had learned from their experience. They saw this as lying within two main areas: support; and ownership and confidence.

The young people felt that they were supported by their trainers, and that their voices and opinions were heard regarding the project. Many of the young people not only noticed a difference in themselves during the project, but two groups (one in Block A and one in Block B) also noticed a change in their trainers.

*I liked working with [trainer] and [mentor] on the project. It wasn't bad. He [trainer] didn't shout at me as much. I liked how they listened to my ideas and took them on board...I felt supported. My ideas went in. I did my own thing rather than being told what to do. (focus group 2)*

A similar view was expressed by focus group 3:

*Enjoyed it. They encouraged you to get on. Rounded us up and told us we're doing it all. They treated us like pals. (focus group 3)*

Ownership of the project was an important aspect of the experience. Consequently across all three groups an increase in confidence was felt, be this for interviews, for working with the equipment or for working with others. The young people believed that their involvement in the programme had contributed to this greatly. When asked about what they had taken from the project, a participant from focus group 1 (Block A) felt:

*[I] didn't learn anything much from the film but did get confident. I wasn't really confident when I came in [to the centre]. [I] hadn't done*

*it [recording] before...more confidence to do something I hadn't done before... (focus group 1)*

This young person continued to relate how this boost in confidence could be used in other areas, for example in interviewing as, '*the filming helped [me] talk to other people*', or activities within the centre, for example singing without being embarrassed (focus group 2). Confidence was a large factor for the other two focus groups held in Block B. One participant (focus group 2) supported this view, but also highlighted teamwork as another quality which she gained from being involved in the project:

*I've taken confidence away from this. It was shown in front of everyone. I was a bit embarrassed. Team work is another thing, getting on with people. I'd definitely use confidence and team work in future. You need confidence for interviews and participating in projects, team work shows that you're working with other people. (focus group 2)*

### **3.5 Lead practitioner's, mentors' and project managers' perspectives**

#### **Introduction**

The lead practitioner, the mentors and representatives from training providers, Scottish Screen and Urban Learning Space are reported here as a single group for two reasons. The first of these is conceptual and relates to research governance. Each of these people can be categorised as participants who *offered* the course in contrast to the trainers and young people who were *recipients* of the course. The lead practitioner, mentors and project managers, it can be argued, form a coherent group and have a shared, if diverse, perspective on the project.

The second reason related to the ethical issues of anonymity and confidentiality. Within such a small grouping complete anonymity cannot be guaranteed. However, if the data gathered from interviews with these participants had been reported as discrete categories, then the individuals involved would have been immediately identifiable, thereby compromising their anonymity.

In total, eight of a possible ten participants from this group were interviewed following completion of the project.

#### **Involvement and understanding**

All members of this group had been involved in the design or development of the project at some stage and to different degrees. The 3-stage process and inclusion of mentors were features of the initial design and all members of the group were clear in their understanding that their purpose was to develop a cohort of practitioners who could deliver and support MIE.

Each of the members of this group, and especially the mentors, had a range of skills and at least 'folk knowledge' of moving images and *Reel to Real* offered them an opportunity to bring these skills and knowledge together with MIE in a way that was intended to develop both.

There was also an intention to create 'layers of learning' and consequently the course was designed to include mentors and trainers, instead of simply training mentors who would subsequently work with training providers. The arrangement of the project in two blocks was intended to accommodate as many mentors and trainers as possible.

There was a common understanding among this group that attainment of the desired outcomes would be dependent on striking an appropriate balance between analytical and creative activities and encouraging trainers to use their own work in order to achieve that balance.

Levels of involvement varied in accordance with members' different roles. Following design and set-up of the project, for example, project managers' direct involvement was largely limited to logistical matters and progress meetings. The lead practitioner and mentors, on the other hand, were involved in each of the three phases in both blocks.

## **Response to Scottish Screen's input**

There was widespread recognition among members of the group that the high quality of the lead practitioner's input and his commitment to the project were vital factors in its success. Mentors reported that they had developed personally and collegiately in response to the project. All indicated that they will use MIE in some way in the future, some have applied to become lead practitioners in their own right, and at least one has incorporated ideas and material related to the project into a further education course.

There was unanimous agreement among this group that the Learn and Teach phases, especially as they had been refined for Block B, were essential to the success of the embed phase. There remained a perception among the majority, however, that more time was spent on analytical rather than creative activities, and there was little distinction between the Learn and Teach phases.

A particular topic arising from interviews among this group concerned the role of mentors. The lead practitioner, mentors and project managers all made reference to the deployment of mentors in each of the distinct phases. Comments related to uncertainty of the mentors' roles, particularly during Learn and Teach, how mentors were allocated to trainers, and how mentors and trainers might work with each other during the Embed phase.

*I needed Block B to understand everything. Block A was good, but I felt that I was learning at the same time as the trainers and that I needed to go through Block A just to understand what I was meant to do.*

Comments regarding the content of the training indicated a high degree of appreciation of the quality of content and knowledge generated. With regard to equipment, however, comments were more varied, ranging from general satisfaction to problems related to availability and quality of cameras and software.

Significantly, though, all mentors reported personal and professional gains for themselves and the trainers with whom they worked. In particular, mentors commented on their extended skills in working with young people in this context. Training provider staff also reported this benefit from mentors. Everyone involved stressed the level of enjoyment and satisfaction they had gained from this project.



## **Impact of the programme on learning and teaching**

All members of this group reported significant benefits for trainers, young people and the training providers. Some of this evidence was through direct contact with trainers and the providers. The claim was supported by secondary evidence from feedback to project managers or from progress meetings.

Evidence from the interviews mirrors the perspectives of trainers and young people reported in section 3.3 and 3.4. For example, one mentor reported:

*For young people, it offers them variety. The outcome was to get them engaged and that has worked. I think to have a creative output is very worthwhile. It is very important for young people who might otherwise have been denied the opportunity.*

Overall, mentors reported effective collaborative relationships among themselves, trainers and young people. It was their perception that trainers and young people had enjoyed MIE and had gained from it in terms of confidence, working with others and improved interpersonal skills.

Whilst the majority of trainers were perceived to have benefited, one indicated that he saw no benefit for his young people and will not use it again. This position contrasts with the views expressed by mentors and project managers that indicate that gains for trainers and training providers were not limited to MIE but encompassed the other creative and technical skills that mentors brought to the context:

*In a wider sense, it is not just R-R or MIE. Our young people are now beginning to look at different types of jobs and not just childcare or construction as they did before. It has also opened up new partnerships for us, for example to bring in drama, music and other creative things. We see how we can link all of that into employability.*

## **Reflections on *Reel to Real***

Overall reflection on *Reel to Real* revealed that it had been a satisfying, enjoyable and effective project that met its aims with few caveats. Those members of the group who had been most closely involved in the running of the project reported Block B was simpler than Block A. Mentors from Block A were also involved in Block B, and there were fewer trainers. However, it was pointed out that low numbers is not necessarily beneficial as more people are likely to generate a greater range of ideas. In that respect, some members of this group reported that Block A was better than Block B.

Moreover, members of the group indicated that in Block B they were better placed to ensure that activities were taking place in the centres in parallel with the training

sessions. Mentoring arrangements also improved between the blocks. The contents of A and B were similar but there was greater awareness by B of where the difficulties might be. Some comments from A informed B. For example, in Block B all mentors had experience of doing analysis and everyone conducted an analysis exercise to the group.

Those members of the group who had experienced previous projects indicated that they felt this was more effective, offering intensive training in a conducive context. From the perspective of this group which offered the course, the greatest satisfaction came in the perception of how it had led to significant change in some instances. The most encouraging example was reported as follows:

*It's great to see the young people taking responsibility and problem solving. It has been a great thing. We have conversations with others in [provider] and it has made us look at the way we work. We need to take the risk and MIE was a risk for us. We were working with a very aggressive group of kids and we asked them to go in front of the camera and deal with emotional things. It was risky but the results were convincing.*

In order that levels of satisfaction, momentum and sustainability can be maintained, several member of this group mentioned the requirement for follow-up. One suggestion related to the development of a virtual space where young people could deposit their work, view other people's work and communicate with each other, even updating their progress once they had moved on from training provision.

In terms of the general monitoring of the project, this group felt that advisory and progress meetings had been helpful but that overall, communications at all levels i.e. project managers and mentors, mentors and trainers, could have been better. One consequence of this may have been possibly too much responsibility falling to the lead practitioner. In addition to planning and running the training sessions and dealing with subsequent issues from mentors and trainers, he also had to deal with administrative arrangements. This was recognised by other members from all sections of this group.

Members of this group made a number of suggestions regarding future development of similar projects. These ranged from altering the balance of activities, to reducing time on the Learn and Teach phases to five weeks, to suggesting that it should be young people and not their trainers who should participate in the project. Another member of the group similarly suggested that trainers should be canvassed prior to the project and only those who were genuinely interested become participants. A universal suggestion, though, related to the value of MIE as a vehicle for learning and personal development:

*If MIE is just a vehicle for the other things, then that renders the project suspect. However, I believe there is an umbilical connection and that moving image literacy is a part of what it means to be alive today, to have influence in the world and not be passive. There is an intimate relationship between social skills and media literacy.*

## **4. Analysis and discussion**

### **4.1 Introduction**

The following represents an analysis and discussion of the data in terms of the research parameters set out in section 2.

### **4.2 The benefits, if any, for trainers and learners (including any impact on trainers' pedagogies)**

The evidence from observations, and the views expressed by trainers, mentors, young people and project managers confirms that there have been significant benefits for trainers and learners as a result of their engagement with MIE. As might be expected in a project of this nature, however, the level of benefit was not uniform across participants but was dependent on a number of factors. Possibly the most influential factor relates to the degree of commitment and engagement with the project that individual trainers were able to offer.

A second significant factor relates to how trainers responded to the training sessions and support from mentors. During those periods when trainers were uncertain of what they should be learning or not confident about teaching MIE, especially the technical aspects, the benefits were reported as minimal. As they became more confident, usually through engagement with the lead practitioner and mentors, they increasingly realised benefits for themselves and the young people with whom they work.

The major benefit reported by trainers and young people and verified in observations and reports from other members of the project, is increased confidence for themselves and the young people with whom they work. Secondly, the ability to work together, negotiate, plan and participate in a creative process was reported as a valuable and enriching experience for both trainers and young people. The culmination of events in a public screening was reported as providing a unique experience for participants with resultant improvements in confidence, self-esteem and pride in their achievement.

None of the trainers reported significant immediate developments in their pedagogies beyond the context of MIE. Several, however, commented on the benefits of analytical and creative tasks for their young people and indicated that they would look to incorporate similar tasks into other areas of their work with young people.

One significant benefit for training agencies, trainers and young people has been the widening of horizons. Comments in section 3.5 regarding the use of a wider range of people in training provider contexts, match those from trainers in 3.3 and young people in 3.4 regarding a new appreciation of film and moving images and a realisation of skills of which previously they were unaware.

### **4.3 Participants' experiences of the various stages of the initiative**

The data gathered from participants indicates that each phase of the initiative was regarded as essential for developing understanding and appreciation of MIE. For most participants, however, there was no clear distinction between the Learn and Teach phases, other than a change of location. Moreover, in Block A, there was a gap between the end of the Teach phase and the beginning of the Embed phase resulting in a loss of continuity and momentum.

In addition, there was a general perception among participants that more time had been spent on analysis than had been necessary and that more time could be spent on the technical aspect of making a film. Evidence from observations, however, indicates that whilst more time was spent on analysis than production, any implied disproportion in activities may not be as great as perceived by participants.

Allied to other features of *Reel to Real* such as confusion over the role of mentors, this suggests that the phasing and mix of activities might benefit from some rethinking. For example, participants suggested that time for Learn and Teach phases be reduced to allow more time for Embed and that there should be a greater focus on technical aspects of film making.

The evidence from the research also questions the requirement for Learn, Teach and Embed to be conceptualised as three discrete phases. Instead, they might be thought of as necessary aspects of the learning process and incorporated into each week's activities.

### **4.4 Sustainability of the initiative and any impact it has beyond the period of the input**

Evidence, largely from interviews with trainers, suggests that MIE will be sustained in the majority of providers beyond the period of input but to different degrees and in different ways. A small number of trainers indicated that they will continue to use MIE frequently and regularly. The majority of trainers indicated that they would use MIE occasionally as they felt appropriate depending on the dynamics of the group of young people they have at any one time.

A number trainers indicated that whilst they would be unlikely to make another film, they might use MIE in a range of curricular areas if they felt it appropriate and had the necessary equipment.

Lack of suitable equipment and the absence of an appropriate follow-up project were highlighted as barriers to sustainability of *Reel to Real* and MIE in general. In addition, the provision of a virtual hub, where young people could deposit their work, view other people's work and perhaps communicate with each other was suggested as a development that would support sustainability.

One outcome of the project that will contribute to sustainability beyond the period of input is the impact it has had on mentors. Evidence from the interviews indicates that they have all incorporated MIE into their repertoire of skills. Some have even applied to become lead practitioners in their own right.

The data, therefore, suggests that *Reel to Real* will be sustained beyond the period of input.

#### **4.5 The effectiveness of this initiative as a model for the introduction, development and sustainability of MIE in this context**

Notwithstanding the above, *Reel to Real* can be considered an effective model for introducing MIE into the more choices, more chance context. Including mentors and trainers, a cohort of fifteen potential teachers of MIE has been created. In addition, MIE is now available to be taught in seven training providers. Several factors contributed to this level of success for the model.

The first significant factor that contributed to the effectiveness of the model was the professional and personal qualities of the lead practitioner. His knowledge and enthusiasm were essential for maintaining interest and motivation among the trainers and mentors.

A second factor related to the location of the training centres in places other than the training providers' premises. Bringing together trainers from different providers allowed for a measure of collaboration and networking among peers that would not otherwise have been possible and which generated a community of support among the trainers.

A third and highly significant factor related to the trainers' perceptions of the relevance of media intelligence for themselves and their young people in contemporary society. In addition, their own and their young people's pleasure and enjoyment in engaging with MIE contributed to the effectiveness of this model. The opportunity to experience and practice what trainers had learned during the Learn phase and experiment with each other during the Teach phase prior to use with young people was influential in the success of the Embed phase.

## 4.6 Summary of discussion points

### *Benefits for trainers and learners*

- Evidence from the research indicated that there were significant benefits for the trainers and learners as a result of their engagement with MIE;
- There was increased confidence for both trainers and young people;
- Working with others was a beneficial experience for both trainers and young people;
- The public screening of projects boosted confidence, self-efficacy and self-esteem for young people;
- There was an increase in skills repertoire and a widening of horizons for trainers;
- The degree to which trainers and young people benefited from each of the above varied.

### *Participants' experiences of the various stages of the initiative*

- The Learn and Teach phases merged into one activity
- More time was spent on analytical activities than on creative activities;
- The role of mentors, and their relationship with trainers, would benefit from clarification;
- The discrete status of the three phases, Learn, Teach and Embed, requires reconsideration.

### *Sustainability of Reel to Real and any impact it has beyond the period of the input*

- Moving Image Education and other elements of media intelligence continue to be part of the curricula in training providers and/or elements of the repertoire of trainers' skills;
- The availability of suitable equipment is essential for the sustainability of the project;
- Increased skills of trainers and mentors will aid sustainability beyond the lifetime of the project.

### *The effectiveness of this initiative as a model for the introduction, development and sustainability of MIE in this context*

- The project has created a new cohort of fifteen potential trainers and introduced MIE into seven training providers;
- The model works well in geographical areas that contain a concentration of training providers;

- The personal and professional qualities of the lead practitioner were a significant factor in the effectiveness of the model;
- Locating the training away from the trainers' place of work and the experience of networking with peers contributed significantly to the effectiveness of the model;
- Relevance of MIE and trainers' enjoyment of the training were significant factors in the effectiveness of *Reel to Real*.



## **Appendices**

## **Appendix A: Observation schedule**

Scottish Screen: Reel to Real observation schedule

Group:

Scottish Screen:

Training organisation:

Trainer(s):

No. in group:

Observer: GH

Date:

Whole group: activity	Purpose	Lead practitioner	Trainer	Time spent

Small groups: activity	Purpose	Lead practitioner	Trainer	Time spent

Individual: activity	Purpose	Lead practitioner	Trainer	Time spent

*Field notes*

**General observation**

**Observation of lead practitioner(s).**

**Observation of trainer(s).**

**Observation of mentors/any others in attendance.**

## **Appendix B: Interview schedule for trainers**



The University of Glasgow, Charity Number SC004401

**Evaluation of**

**Scottish Screen's Reel to Real  
MIE Initiative (MCMC groups)**

**Interview Schedule for Scottish Screen and Urban Learning Space**

Interviewee: Organisation

Date: Place:

Time start: Time finish:

Interviewer(s): George Head / Angela Jaap

### **Section A: Interviewee's involvement and understanding**

1. What do you understand to be the purpose of the programme?
2. What was the thinking behind the design of R-R?
3. What part have you/your organisation played in the project

### **Section B: response to Scottish Screen's input**

4. How effective were the lead practitioner input sessions in meeting the aims of the project?
5. Can you comment on the effectiveness of R-R at each phase of the project?

Learning, weeks 1-5 at DMA;

Teach, weeks 6-9 at LEW,

Embed, at providers' place of work

6. What level of communication and collaboration was there between ULS and Scottish Screen?

## **Section C: Impact of the programme on learning and teaching**

7. Are you aware of any impact that R-R has had on the learning of the 6 mentors?.
8. Are you aware of any impact that R-R has had on training provider staff who attended?
9. Are you aware of any impact that R-R has had on the young people with whom they work?
10. What benefits do you see for yourself as a result of taking part in R-R?

## **Reflection/Perspectives of Reel to Real**

11. What are your opinions about the effectiveness of R-R as a way of introducing MIE into this context?
12. How, if at all, do you intend to develop MIE in the immediate and longer term?
13. Do you have any suggestions for improvements in the design and delivery of the project?
14. Is there anything else you want to tell me that my questions have not allowed you to say?
15. Thank you for taking part. Is there anything you want to ask me?



## **Appendix C: Interview schedule for Mentors**



**Evaluation of**

**Scottish Screen's Reel to Real  
MIE Initiative (MCMC groups)**

**Interview Schedule for Mentors**

Interviewee:

Date:

Place:

Time start:

Time finish:

Interviewer(s): George Head / Angela Jaap

## **Section A: Interviewee's involvement and understanding**

1. What are your experiences of working in the programme?
2. How do you think that it might benefit you?
3. What do you think might be the main benefits for the trainers and young people with whom you worked?

## **Section B: response to Scottish Screen's input**

4. How helpful did you find the lead practitioner input sessions?
5. Can you comment on the effectiveness of the experience at each phase of the project?

Learning, weeks 1-5 at DMA;

Teach, weeks 6-9 at LEW,

Embed, at training provider

6. What support was available from ULS and Scottish Screen (e.g. mentor meetings)?
  - a. Did you use this?
  - b. Was it useful? If so, in which way(s)?

## **Section C: Impact of the programme on learning and teaching of trainers and their clients**

7. How did the trainers respond to you in phases 1 and 2 but especially in phase 3?
8. How did the young people respond to you and their trainers during the various MIE activities, including analysis, scripting, filming and editing?
9. Were you able to detect any impact on attitude, motivation, self-esteem of the young people that you feel can be attributed to the programme? What evidence do you have?
10. Do you think that the programme has had an impact on the young people's appreciation and enjoyment of the creative and visual arts? If so, in what ways?

## **Reflection/Perspectives of Reel to Real**

11. What are your opinions about the sustainability and practical value of the project?
12. How do you intend to develop MIE in the immediate and longer term?
13. Do you have any suggestions for improvements in the design and delivery of the project?
14. Is there anything else you want to tell me that my questions have not allowed you to say?
15. Thank you for taking part. Is there anything you want to ask me?

## **Appendix D: Interview schedule for lead practitioner/training provider**



**Evaluation of**

**Scottish Screen's Reel to Real  
MIE Initiative (MCMC groups)**

**Interview Schedule for lead practitioner / training providers**

Interviewee:

Date:

Place:

Time start:

Time finish:

Interviewer(s): George Head / Angela Jaap

**How does Reel to Real compare with previous initiatives in terms of**

**a) benefits to trainers and learners / mentors?**

**b) Sustainability**

**c) a model for introduction**

**d) other comments**

## **Appendix E: Interview schedule for Scottish Screen and Urban Learning Space**





The University of Glasgow, Charity Number SC004401

**Evaluation of**

Scottish Screen's Reel to Real  
**MIE Initiative (MCMC groups)**

**Interview Schedule for Scottish Screen and Urban Learning Space**

Interviewee: Organisation

Date: Place:

Time start: Time finish:

Interviewer(s): George Head / Angela Jaap

### **Section A: Interviewee's involvement and understanding**

1. What do you understand to be the purpose of the programme?
2. What was the thinking behind the design of R-R?
3. What part have you/your organisation played in the project

### **Section B: response to Scottish Screen's input**

4. How effective were the lead practitioner input sessions in meeting the aims of the project?
5. Can you comment on the effectiveness of R-R at each phase of the project?

Learning, weeks 1-5 at DMA;

Teach, weeks 6-9 at LEW,

Embed, at providers' place of work

6. What level of communication and collaboration was there between ULS and Scottish Screen?

## **Section C: Impact of the programme on learning and teaching**

7. Are you aware of any impact that R-R has had on the learning of the 6 mentors?.
8. Are you aware of any impact that R-R has had on training provider staff who attended?
9. Are you aware of any impact that R-R has had on the young people with whom they work?
10. What benefits do you see for yourself as a result of taking part in R-R?

## **Reflection/Perspectives of Reel to Real**

11. What are your opinions about the effectiveness of R-R as a way of introducing MIE into this context?
12. How, if at all, do you intend to develop MIE in the immediate and longer term?
13. Do you have any suggestions for improvements in the design and delivery of the project?
14. Is there anything else you want to tell me that my questions have not allowed you to say?
15. Thank you for taking part. Is there anything you want to ask me?

## **Appendix F: Interim Report**

## **Observations from block A**

The quality of David's input is the main ingredient of the success of block A. Materials were well chosen and captured and sustained the imagination and interest of the group members.

All 3 mentors sustained and developed their interest in the project. All made contributions to each of the sessions.

When given lead roles, mentors were enthusiastic and animated.

Trainers were enthusiastic about practical sessions, especially film-making.

As the group progressed, trainers made better contributions to discussions.

Trainers reported mixed results when they tried things with their client groups.

By the end of phase 2, some trainers were enthusiastic and willing to introduce MIE into their own contexts (i.e. phase 3: embed). Others were less confident about taking part in analysis sessions (using the grid) and using MIE with their client groups.

**Suggestions:** these suggestion are intended only for discussion. They are not prescriptive in any way.

More practical tasks in the sessions and especially greater use made of mentors, possibly supporting trainers on-site during phases 1 and 2.

One analysis task set each week e.g. analysis of a scene or short film (including own work).

One practical task set each week e.g. young people filming themselves or each other from different angles.

Gradually develop tasks into a project e.g. film, advert, video diary, visual CV, interview skills etc.

Storyboarding, scripting, editing and filming etc., introduced through development of tasks.

Analysis used to illustrate and explore points and issues arising during the tasks.

Redistribution of mentors' hours to provided support during phases 1 and 2?

Visits by 2 or even 3 mentors as appropriate?